



STATE OF WASHINGTON

STATE BUILDING CODE COUNCIL

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AD HOC COMMITTEE ON RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT FACILITIES SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES

LOCATION: DES Building, Room 2331
1500 Jefferson Street
Olympia, WA 98501

MEETING DATE: May 31, 2017

Agenda Items	Committee Actions/Discussion
1. Welcome and Introductions	<p>Meeting called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Jim Tinner, Committee Chair. Everyone was welcomed and introductions were made.</p> <p><u>Members in Attendance:</u> Jim Tinner, Chair; Steve Simpson; Duane Jonlin <u>Other Council Members Present:</u> Eric Vander Mey <u>Staff In Attendance:</u> Tim Nogler, Managing Director; Krista Braaksma <u>Visitors Present:</u> Bart Eggen, Dave Hanson, Allen Spaulding, John Williams, Ron Wright</p>
2. Review and Approve Agenda	<p>The agenda was approved as written. Tim Nogler noted there was also a proposal from Eric Vander Mey that addressed how these types of facilities should be treated in the energy code and mechanical code.</p>
3. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda	<p>None offered.</p>
4. Residential Treatment Facilities	<p>Tim reviewed the notes from the BFP Committee discussion on May 11, and provided some background on the requests/letters from legislators, the issues brought forward by Ron Wright and the changes made at the national code level for the 2015 International Building Code.</p> <p>The two significant areas of concern for Mr. Wright are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) The single code classification for all Residential Treatment Facilities as I-1, Condition 2, without any allowable adjustment based upon the actual use of the facility. There is currently a large variance in the type of services provided by Residential Treatment Facilities. For instance, an RTF for chemically addicted pregnant women has the same code requirements as an involuntary mental health evaluation and treatment facility, and2) the interpretation of the individual bedrooms with an RTF as being separate sleeping units requiring one-hour fire protects requiring one-hour fire protection for the perimeter of the room, as well as full corridor protection for the common day room area that the bedrooms open out to. The cost for compliance with this provision is excessive, and does not provide additional life safety protection commensurate

with the additional costs. In fact, operators of these facilities indicate that these provisions actually make the facility less safe to operate. Mr. Wright noted that an overlay of something similar to the code provisions pertaining to Psychiatric Treatment Areas (IBC 407.2.3, pertaining to I-2 Occupancies) would go a long way to solving this issue, but this provision is for I-2 Occupancies, and is not permitted to be used within I-1, Condition 2 facilities.

Jim Tinner asked Ron Wright about fire sprinklers, does his proposal require the full NFPA13 system? Ron said the upgrade to the sprinkler system is more a cost effective method to provide fire safety in RTF. He said the amendment he proposes would require a full sprinkler system. Mr. Wright mentioned that all RTF buildings are equipped with a NFPA-13 system with Early Suppression Fast Response (ESFR) heads which is intended to suppress the fire rather than just provide time for evacuation which is the purpose of a NFPA-13R system. IBC Section 903.2.6 Exception #2 allows reduction to a NFPA 13-D sprinkler system for RTF's with 15 or fewer persons receiving care (state amendment). It's Mr. Wright's opinion that the increased sprinkler coverage should mitigate the need for fire partitions between the sleeping units.

Duane asked about the cost of fire partitions, just a layer of sheet rock from floor to ceiling, where is the cost?

The Committee discussed Mr. Wright's proposal and the impact of fire dampers and if they were actually required. The Committee requested Mr. Wright provide estimates and plans showing costs for the added sheetrock and fire damper locations.

Allen Spaulding stated that DOH does not agree with Mr. Wright's proposal to substitute a full NFPA 13 sprinkler system in lieu of one hour fire partitions. When the original state amendment was developed with stakeholders and proposed to the Council, they tried to achieve a balanced approach between cost and fire safety. The current code requirements are consistent with those over at least the last 20 years. Many of the facilities covered by the new proposal are involuntary commitment treatment centers. There are also no staffing ratio requirements in the licensing requirements, so you could have one staff member trying to assist multiple patients in an evacuation event. Some facilities will even have two separate treatment areas that intersect, so there would be one staff member assisting patients in both areas.

Ron Wright objected to this scenario and asked that functional plan of the facilities be reviewed rather than any speculated staffing issues.

John Williams noted that when examining possible code changes, you need to think about any unintended consequences that may arise. John told the committee that the purpose of the rated fire partitions was intended to provide a level of safe shelter in the event of a fire where a person in the sleeping room had no warning of the fire due to the room being isolated from the place of origin of the fire.

Mr. Wright and the representatives from DOH also debated the issue of doors and door closers and what was acceptable.

	<p>John Williams suggested not identifying RTFs as a specific occupancy classification and letting the use guide the classification by the building department. Al Spaulding noted the original proposal identified the classification to provide consistency between jurisdictions. Ron Wright suggested making residential treatment facilities less expensive to build by following his proposal and allowing the functional use of the buildings.</p> <p>The group also looked at the requirements for intervening rooms, corridors and fire partitions to try to identify any specific options or problems.</p> <p>The committee did not forward recommendations to the BFP committee as it was felt that there is inadequate information to arrive at a consensus. It was further agreed that with Mr. Wright's added information regarding costs the BFP committee would be better equipped to make recommendation to the full SBCC. Jim Tinner asked Mr. Wright if he could provide a detailed cost breakdown for the BFP committee to review.</p> <p>Mr. Wright agreed to provide plans and data for the June 8 BFP Committee meeting.</p> <p>The Committee briefly went over Eric's proposal. Jim Tinner asked if Eric had an analysis showing the differences between the requirements for Group I and Group R in the energy and mechanical codes. Tim shared some items Eric provided in an email. Eric said he could put something together for the June 8 meeting.</p>
5. Staff Report	Tim said this issue will be heard again at the BFP Committee meeting next Thursday, June 8. June 9 is the last scheduled Council meeting before September.
6. Other Business	None.
7. Adjourn	Meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.